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env expansion of Soviet power. While a few expressed some concern about what the Soviet reaction would be, most of these leaders showed more confidence than many Americans ever would dare in asserting that the Russians had no choice but to back down. After the Soviet decision, more than a few came up to Americans, congratulated then on the victory, and stated that they had never doubted for a minute what the outcome would be.

The opinion of was representative of the reaction of local leaders and dignitaries. He said that he was pleased to read of the President's decision, since the Communists and Russians understood only might. He also pointed out, two days before NATUGATUREV ordered the dissentling of the missile sites, that the Communists have no compunctions about retreating any more than they do about advancing, provided their interests demanded it.

Queen PRIDERICA, who was in Thessaloniki for three days for the 50th inniversary celebrations of the liberation of Thessaloniki, expressed at one point to the Mayor of Hartford, Connecticut her uneasiness over the situation. She said on Ictober 26 that she hoped the President was prepared to seek a compromise solution to the crisis, and wondered what the Soviet reaction to an invasion of Cubs would be. On Sunday evening, however, when the news reached her about Marushchev's decision to dismantle the Soviet missile bases in Cuba, she and Ming PAUL expressed to the Consul General their relief and pleasure at Marushchev's decision. The Queen, in particular, held the Consul General in conversation for several minutes despite the fact that he was the first in line to be presented with a long line waiting behind him. At the end of the conversation the Queen was so moved that she placed her left hand on his shoulder while shaking hands again. The Prime Minister also stated to the Consul General that he was very pleased with the announcement.

Reaction of General Public

Reports from members of the American community indicate that the reaction of the general public was one of enthusiastic support of the Fresident's action. Lany Greeks made a point of relating conversations held at the local cafenic or in social groups about the near unanimous support of the U.S. nove. One high school professor related how in a gathering of six professional men on October 27, including a doctor and an army officer, all arrived by different paths to the conclusion that the Fresident's action was necessary. A group at a cafenic, two days after the news reached Thesseloniki, unanimously agreed that an invasion of Juba was the next step. Two U.S. Army officers reported an enthusiastic response to the U.S. move by Greeks of all classes and occupations during a field trip in Thrace and Eastern Racedonia from October 22 - 27.

To a great many the next logical step seemed to be an invasion of Cuba in order to deal the Communists a sound whipping. The undercurrent of anxiety

Page 3 of 5 4-36 From Thessaloniki

reported among responsible persons in athens did not seem to reach the men in the street in Thessaloniki. One foreigner remarked in this respect that the Greek's strong dislike of communism and Slavs in general, and his belief in the rightness of U.S. policy and in U.S. power made him blissfully unaware of the dangers involved in making a determined stand to stop Soviet expansion in Cuba.

In addition, the whole dramatic episode which lasted from Konday until Sunday evening coincided almost exactly with the city's most festive annual event, the celebration of the Feast of Scint Demetrios on October 26, the same day as the anniversary of the city, and the celebration of "Oxi" Day on October 28, 1940, when the Greek leader WILLA said "No" to an Italian ultimatum. Decause Saint Denetrios Day this year is the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the liberation of Thessaloniki from the Turks, the ceremonies, which ran from Wednesday to Sunday, were more extensive than usual. The entire royal family was present, including Frincess SOFHIA's husband of six months, Don Juan CARLOS of Spain, Prime Minister CARLOLLIAS and five of his Cabinet ministers, as well as the Payor of Hartford, Connecticut, with whom this city has established a sister city relationship. About 18 units of the Greek fleet were here for the visit, and a mice military parade, the largest of the year, was held. In addition, a large student parade was held as well as receptions, special decorations throughout the city, frequent appearances of the royal family and the Frime Hinister at dedications of housing projects, hospitals, a museum, etc. Finally, the extremely pleasent Indian Summer weather which lasted throughout the five days made it difficult for most Thessalonians to concentrate on the crisis situation unfolding in Cuba. While the crisis almost certainly dempened some of the gaiety of the ceremonies, the effect probably worked more in the other direction. The festival atmosphere made the threat of nuclear war seem unreal and helped to induce the comforting thought that the United States would take care of the situation and everything would come out all right.

Jumery of Fress Reaction

The press accorded full treatment to the crisis. The front pages were generally loaded with headlines and photographs and with more than one column on the latest developments. However, special editions of a surprising number of pages, planned weeks before the anniversary celebrations, forced the Cuban story to the back pages on October 26 or 28, depending on the newspaper.

Another interesting point is that there has been very little editorial comment on the situation, although it is known that the editors of the two leading newspapers, lakedonia and Illinikos Vorras, have been openly in agreement with the President's actions of the past week. (The occasion of the anniversary celebrations probably helped to reduce the amount of comment.) Wire service stories were carried in volume, but neither Athens nor local reaction was printed. Ellinikos Vorras commented on October 25 that hope remains for a peaceful settlement and attacked the Soviet Union for placing missiles in Juba. Drassis, Illinikos Vorras, and Eleftheros Leos on October 29 or 30 credited the saving of the peace to the President's quick action, and went even further by

stating that the situation was a moral victory for the West, a triumphant victory for the United States, and that Mhrushchev was obliged to put his tail between his logs and withdraw unconditionally.

Bilgaria.

During reports concerning a military buildup in Bulgaria generally have not proven to be correct and later indications are that there were few preparations there. General Esametic said on Cotober 25 that evidence of Bulgarian preparations along the border was "almost nothing." Two U.S. Army officers improved the torder lest weekend and talked to Greek field commanders in Thrace. and found no evidence of any unusual preparations. The Army Attache in Sofia draws from Sofia to Thessaloniki on Genover 29 and reported no unusual activity along the main road from Sofia to the Struma Valley exit. He saw no indications of civilian control measures; critical bridges and tunnels were unguarded and military traffic was at a minimum. This officer stated there was considerably made activity on the drawk side and that at one point near Sidirokastron the last and mains the road. (This, however, is not unusual.) Hewspaper reports and runors circulating in Thessaloniki these past days have been to the effect that the Bulgarians were not undertaking large-scale military preparations.

licellaneous Developments

The price of the gold sovereign rose from 291.5 drachmas on october 22 to a him of 309 drachmas on october 27. By October 31, the price had fallen to 295. About 50,000 gold sovereigns were sold between October 20-30. It is estimated that during the five days following the crisis the rate of sales rose from 4,000 to 6-7,000 sovereigns daily.

There were no reports of food hoarding or other unusual activities here, such as troop novements, special radio broadcasts, etc., as a result of the other orisis.

Clearcent Procedure

Theselouisi port suthorities were asked on lotober 27 to inform the Consulate Genoval of any ship departures for the Cuban quarantine area. On Cotober 19 the Employ Rester had already received instructions from the Greek Ministry of Rerchant Portine to assist U.S. authorities in carrying out ship inspections under the clearcest system. Local harbor authorities indicated their resdimess to cooperate fully in making the system operate effectively. They pointed out, however, that very few ships leave from Thesealouist as a last port of call before proceeding to the quarantine area.

U.S. Citisens and DOE Plan

There was some auxiety expressed by U.S. citizens in the area during the first few days of the crisis and a few gave thought to returning to the United States. A meeting was held in the office of the Consil General on October 25

with those leading numbers of the American community



Lessons' Learned from the Crisis

In addition, the crisis served to point up certain problems in the fields of organization, communications and limits between the Consulate General and the Antassy, which will be discussed in detail the Enbassy at the earliest possible moment.

Robert S. Folson Consul General

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From Thessaloniki

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